

WILMERHALE

April 25, 2006

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Department of Homeland Security
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Re: Request Submitted Under the Freedom of Information Act for Records Concerning Detainees, including "Ghost Detainees/Prisoners," "Unregistered Detainees/Prisoners," and "CIA Detainees/Prisoners"

Dear Freedom of Information Officer:

This letter constitutes a request ("Request") pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552 ("FOIA"). The Request is submitted on behalf of Amnesty International ("AI") and Washington Square Legal Services, Inc. ("WSLS"). AI is a non-government organization and a world-wide movement of members who campaign for internationally-recognized human rights. WSLS is the corporation that houses the International Human Rights Clinic ("the Clinic") of the New York University School of Law ("NYU Law School"). The Clinic is a project of NYU Law School's Center for Human Rights and Global Justice ("CHRGJ").

We are filing this request simultaneously with the Department of Defense (including its components, the Department of the Army, Navy and Air Force, the Marine Corps, and the Defense Intelligence Agency), the Department of Justice (including its components, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Office of Intelligence Policy and Review), the Department of State, the Central Intelligence Agency, and the Department of Homeland Security (including its components the Office of Intelligence and Analysis, the Directorate for Policy, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, U.S. Coast Guard, and U.S. Customs and Border Protection). By this letter, we also request expedited processing pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(6)(E).

We are seeking the opportunity to inspect and copy, if necessary, all records in the possession of the Department, including any officers, divisions or bureaus thereof, on the topics listed below.

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Definitions

For purposes of this request, the following terms shall be understood as described below:

The term "records" includes any and all reports, statements, examinations, memoranda, correspondence (including electronic mail), designs, maps, photographs, microfilms, computer tapes or disks, rules, regulations, codes, handbooks, manuals, or guidelines.

The term "government official" includes any U.S. government employee, and any person providing services to any agency of the United States government on a contractual basis, regardless of his or her rank or ability to speak or make decisions on behalf of the U.S. government.

The term "foreign official" includes any foreign government employee, and any person providing services to any agency of a foreign government on a contractual basis, regardless of his or her rank or ability to speak or make decisions on behalf of the foreign government.

The term "communication" means the giving, receiving, transmitting, or exchanging of information, including, but not limited to, any and all written, printed, telephonic, electronic, and in-person conversations by and with any person, and/or talk, gestures, or documents which memorialize or refer to any communications.

The term "detainee" means any person deprived of their liberty by one or more individuals or agencies who is prevented by any means from leaving the place in which he or she is being held. The term "detention" means depriving any person of their liberty such that they are prevented by any means from leaving the place in which they are held.

The term "place of detention" means any place or facility in which a "detainee" is kept, inside or outside the United States, regardless of whether it is officially recognized as a place of detention.

Scope of Request

Unless otherwise stated, this request refers to *individuals who were, have been, or continue to be deprived of their liberty by or with the involvement of the United States and about whom the United States has not provided public information. These individuals have been referred to, among other things, as "ghost detainees/prisoners," "unregistered detainees/prisoners," "CIA detainees/prisoners" and "Other Governmental Agency Detainees" ("OGA Detainees").* These individuals have reportedly been held in various locations, including regular and irregular detention facilities, ships, aircraft, and military bases.

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Although not limited to any specific geographic area, this request pertains particularly to the following places:

Afghanistan	Azerbaijan	Bulgaria	Djibouti
Egypt	Germany	Indonesia	Iraq
Jordan	Kosovo	Macedonia	Morocco
Pakistan	Poland	Romania	Syria
Thailand	Turkey	Ukraine	
United Kingdom (including Diego Garcia)			
United States (including all territories under the S.M.T.J.)			
Uzbekistan	Yemen		

This Request does not seek records related to the formal extradition of individuals.

Requested records pertain to persons apprehended since September 11, 2001.

Background

Numerous media reports indicate that the United States is involved in the secret or irregular apprehension, transfer, and detention of individuals on foreign territory.¹ These reports suggest that the government secretly detains and transports individuals on U.S. ships, military bases, and U.S.-chartered planes, as well as in foreign states.²

¹ See, e.g., Dana Priest, *CIA Holds Terror Suspects in Secret Prisons*, WASH. POST, Nov. 2, 2005, at A1; Jan Cieski, Christopher Condon, Caroline Daniel, Guy Dinmore, Andrei Postelnicu, & Demetri Sevestopulo, *Evidence CIA Has Secret Jails in Europe*, FINANCIAL TIMES (LONDON), Nov. 3, 2005, at 1; Siobhan Gorman & Tom Bowman, *Reports of Secret CIA Prisons Prompt Concern*, L.A. TIMES, Nov. 3, 2005, at A4; Douglas Jehl & David Johnston, *CIA Now Acting Independently to Move Prisoners*, INT'L HERALD TRIB., Mar. 7, 2005, at 4; Dana Priest, *Wrongful Imprisonment: Anatomy of a CIA Mistake: German Citizen Released After Months in Rendition*, WASH. POST., Dec. 4, 2005; Brian Ross and Richard Esposito, *Exclusive: Sources Tell ABC News Top Al Qaeda Figures Held in Secret CIA Prisons*, ABC News, Dec. 5, 2005, at <http://abcnews.go.com/WNT/Investigation/story?id=1375123>; Eric Schmitt and Thom Shanker, *Rumsfeld Issued an Order to Hide Detainee in Iraq*, N.Y. Times, June 17, 2004, at A1; *US bars access to terror suspects*, BBC NEWS, Dec. 9, 2005; Josh White, Army, *CIA Agreed on 'Ghost' Prisoners*, WASH. POST, Mar. 11, 2005, at A16; *White House Mum on Secret CIA Prisons*, AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE ENGLISH WIRE, Nov. 2, 2005; *Yemen says U.S. sent prisoners to Europe*, UNITED PRESS INT'L (UPI), Dec. 11, 2005, at <http://www.upi.com/InternationalIntelligence/view.php?StoryID=20051211-051738-9694r>.

² See, id. and further e.g., Craig Whitlock, *Europeans Probe Secret CIA Flights; Questions Surround Possible Illegal Transfer of Terrorism Suspects*, WASH. POST, Nov. 17, 2005, at A22; Eric Schmitt & Carolyn Marshall, *In Secret Unit's 'Black Room,' a Grim Portrait of U.S. Abuse*, N.Y. TIMES, Mar. 19, 2006.

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Records Requested

Please disclose any records reflecting, discussing or referring to the policy and/or practice concerning:

1. The apprehension, transfer, detention, and interrogation of persons within the Scope of Request, including but not limited to:
 - (a) The transfer of intelligence by one or more U.S. agencies or government officials to one or more foreign agencies or officials, in connection with the apprehension or detention of a person.
 - (b) A request or direction by one or more U.S. agencies or government officials to one or more foreign agencies or officials regarding the apprehension of any person, and any related agreement concerning such apprehension.
 - (c) The apprehension of a person in a foreign country by, with the involvement of, or in the presence of one or more U.S. officials.
 - (d) The transfer of a person from any country to any other country for the purpose of detention and/or interrogation, at the direction or request or with the knowledge of one or more U.S. agencies or officials.
 - (e) The transfer of a person from one place of detention to another within the same country at the direction or request or with the knowledge of one or more U.S. agencies or officials.
 - (f) The detention of a person in a foreign country at the direction or request of one or more U.S. agencies or officials, including any agreement concerning the detention.
 - (g) One or more U.S. agencies or officials seeking and/or being granted access to a foreign national detained in a foreign country.
 - (h) One or more U.S. agencies or officials being present in a place of detention in a foreign country. This does not include visits to U.S. citizens by U.S. officials pursuant to the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations.
 - (i) One or more U.S. agencies having control, direction, or administration of a subdivision, portion, or "cell" of a place of detention in a foreign country.

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2. Current and former places of detention where individuals within the Scope of Request have been or are currently held, including but not limited to:
 - (a) Any place of detention in a foreign country being under the control, direction, or administration of one or more U.S. agencies.
 - (b) Any place of detention that is not under the control, direction or administration of one or more U.S. agencies, where a detainee is held at the request or instruction of one or more U.S. agencies or officials.
 - (c) Any subdivision, portion, or "cell" of a place of detention in a foreign country under the control, direction, or administration of one or more U.S. agencies.
 - (d) Any agreement between the U.S. government or one or more U.S. agencies or officials, and a foreign government or one or more foreign agencies or officials, in relation to a place of detention in a foreign country, regardless of whether that place of detention is foreign or U.S.—controlled.
3. The names and identities of detainees who fall within the scope of this request.³

Fee Waiver

The requestors qualify as "representatives of the news media" and the records sought are not for commercial use. Moreover, this Request "is likely to contribute significantly to the public understanding of the operations or activities of the government and is not primarily in the commercial interest of the requester[s]." 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(4)(A)(iii).

Amnesty International is a non-governmental organization and a world-wide movement of members who campaign for internationally recognized human rights. AI publishes reports, press-briefings, newsletters and urgent action requests informing the public about human rights, including torture and disappearances. AI also disseminates information through its website www.amnesty.org.

³ Because of the nature of their detention, the requesters do not know the names or identities of those within the scope of this request. For examples of individuals that the United States has acknowledged detaining, but about whom the United States has not provided public information, see Center for Human Rights and Global Justice, *Fate and Whereabouts Unknown: Detainees in the "War on Terror"* (2005), available at <http://www.nyuhrg.org/docs/Whereabouts%20Unknown%20Final.pdf>; and Human Rights Watch, "List of 'Ghost Prisoners' Possibly in CIA Custody" (2005), available at <http://hrw.org/english/docs/2005/11/30/usdom12109.htm>. The scope of this request extends far beyond these examples.

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The Center for Human Rights and Global Justice is a research center at NYU Law School. CHRGJ aims to advance human rights and respect for the rule of law through advocacy, scholarship, education and training. CHRGJ publishes reports and operates a website www.nyuhr.org discussing human rights issues.

The International Human Rights Clinic is a project of CHRGJ and an official program at NYU Law School, composed of students and directed by clinical professors, who engage in research and advocacy on human rights issues.

Washington Square Legal Services is a not-for-profit corporation that houses the clinical program of NYU Law School.

The requesters plan to disseminate the information disclosed as a result of this Request through the channels described above.

Expedited Processing

Expedited processing is warranted as there is a “compelling need” for the records sought in this Request. 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(6)(E)(i)(I). This need arises because the requesters are “primarily engaged in disseminating information” and there is an “urgency to inform the public concerning actual or alleged Federal Government Activity.” 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(6)(E)(v)(II). *See also* 32 C.F.R. § 286.4(d)(3)(ii) (DOD); 6 C.F.R. § 5.5(d)(1)(ii) (DHS); 28 C.F.R. § 16.5(d)(1)(ii) (DOJ); 22 C.F.R. § 171.12(b)(2) (DOS).

AI is primarily engaged in disseminating information about human rights, through its reports, newsletters, press-briefings, urgent action requests, and on its website. CHRGJ is engaged in disseminating information about human rights, including in particular, the Federal Government’s role in upholding human rights. As indicated above, this information is disseminated through published reports and CHRGJ’s website. The Clinic actively supports this work, and WSLS houses the clinic. As reflected in the media articles cited above, there is an urgent need to provide the public with information relating to the U.S. government’s practices concerning unregistered or ghost detainees.

There is also a “compelling need” because failure to obtain the records on an expedited basis “could reasonably be expected to pose an imminent threat to the life or physical safety of an individual.” 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(6)(E)(v)(I). *See also* 32 C.F.R. § 286.4(d)(3)(i) (DOD); 6 C.F.R. § 5.5(d)(1)(i) (DHS); 28 C.F.R. § 16.5(d)(1)(i) (DOJ); 22 C.F.R. § 171.12(b)(1) (DOS). This Request arises in the context of allegations of ongoing unlawful detention and abuse of individuals with the involvement of U.S. agents abroad. Failure to publicly expose and thereby halt any such practices could reasonably be expected to pose an imminent threat to the physical

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safety and lives of individuals whose identities we are unable to ascertain without the records sought herein.

AI and WSLs certify that the foregoing statements regarding the basis for expedited processing are true and correct to the best of their knowledge and belief. 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(6)(E)(vi). *See also* 32 C.F.R. § 286.4(d)(3)(iii) (DOD); 6 C.F.R. § 5.5(d)(3) (DHS); 28 C.F.R. § 16.5(d)(3) (DOJ); 22 C.F.R. § 171.12(b) (DOS).

* * *

If this Request is denied in whole or part, we ask that you justify all deletions by reference to specific exemptions of the FOIA. We expect release of all segregable portions of otherwise exempt material. We also reserve the right to appeal a decision to withhold any information or to deny a waiver of fees.

As indicated above, we are applying for expedited processing of this Request. Notwithstanding your determination of that application, we look forward to your reply to the Request **within twenty (20) days**, as required under 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(6)(A)(i).

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Thank you for your prompt attention. Please direct all questions and future responses to:

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